



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION II

DATE:

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SUBJECT: Removal Site Evaluation for Celia's Laundry, San Juan, Puerto Rico
(CERCLIS ID No. PR0002196368)

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TO: Joseph Rotola, Chief
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Introduction

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Removal Action Branch has been requested to conduct a Removal Site Evaluation (RSE) at Celia's Laundry, a site where no further remedial action is planned (NFRAP). The NFRAP determination signifies that no additional remedial steps will be taken to list the Site on the National Priorities List unless new information warranting further Superfund consideration or conditions not previously known to EPA regarding the Site are disclosed. As of November 29, 2005, EPA had determined that no further remedial action was warranted by the Federal Superfund program at Celia's Laundry.

Site Description and Background

Celia's Laundry (Site) is located at 247 Eleanor Roosevelt Street in San Juan, Puerto Rico. It consists of a dry cleaning and laundry facility on the first floor of a two-story building. The business has been operating at the Site since 1978. The Site is approximately 1,100 square feet in size. The second story is the owner's residence. The area around the Site is a mix of residential, commercial and retail.

The dry cleaning process is performed using tetrachloroethylene (PCE) pumped from a drum connected to the dry cleaning machine. The dry cleaning portion of the business is situated on a concrete floor with a concrete ditch to collect any potential spills of PCE. Any potential spill would be pumped into the drum that is connected to the dry cleaning machine however; it is reported there was no secondary containment to prevent the PCE from flowing into a yard behind the building. The yard portion of the Site is reportedly completely fenced.

An EQB site visit in November 2001 identified three rusted drums on a concrete pad in the rear yard containing PCE labels and two partially buried drums on their sides that were reportedly used to store kerosene. During a Site Investigation conducted by EQB in March 2004 it was noted that the drums labeled as PCE were no longer present in the yard.

The Site is located in a heavily developed, urban area. The number of people residing within one-half mile of the Site is approximately 37,000 persons, while the population within one mile of the Site is approximately 96,000 persons.

There are 27 PRASA drinking water wells located within a four mile radius of the Site. Two downgradient wells, located within two miles of the Site, were closed due to volatile organic compounds (VOCs) contamination in 1987. As of 2004, most of these wells have reportedly been either abandoned or on standby status in case of an emergency or drought. Two of these wells are downgradient and within one-half mile of the Site. The water distribution system in San Juan is blended however; most of the population in the San Juan area is reportedly served by surface water intakes from dammed streams. The major industries in San Juan obtain water supply from surface water intakes and several wells for both industrial use and drinking water. There are 17 designated Wellhead Protection Areas within four miles of the Site. All runoff from the Site would drain into a storm sewer system; although it is unclear which surface water body would receive the flow. The Martin Pena Canal is the closest surface water body, located approximately one mile to the north of the Site.

The Site was investigated as a potential source of the VOC groundwater contamination present in some of the potable supply wells in the San Juan area due to its proximity to the contaminated wells.

Site assessment activities/observations

The Pre-Remedial site files, which included a Site Inspection (SI) Report (July 2004), were reviewed as part of this Removal Site Evaluation. A site reconnaissance was conducted by the Removal Action Branch on January 23, 2012. The business at Celia's Laundry remains active. The layout of the neighborhood around the Site is typical of an urban area.

Release or threatened release into the environment of a hazardous substance, or pollutant or contaminant

Sampling conducted in May 2004 as part of an SI identified lead (260 ppm), mercury (0.68 ppm) and zinc (5,500 ppm) in the surface soil (and down to three feet) of the yard. No organic contaminants were detected in these samples. Water samples collected from two PRASA potable wells located within two miles of the Site detected copper (31 ppb).

Threats to Public Health or Welfare

There is no threat to public health or welfare, with respect to a release of VOCs from the Site impacting supply wells, since a release of VOCs has not been documented at the Site. The metals identified in the soil at the Site are not associated with typical dry cleaning operations. Regardless of the source, the concentrations of the metals do not exceed EPA Region III Screening Levels.

Threats to the Environment

At this time there is no documentation to indicate that the Site is currently having an acute impact to any sensitive environments or natural resources.

Conclusions

Based on the available information, the Site does not warrant a CERCLA removal action at this time.